

Background

Beginning in October 2006, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) has taken steps towards applying to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) for a specialized license plate. The plate would generate additional revenue for the SNC and would help create awareness of the need for additional investment in the Region.

To date, a design has been approved and the SNC has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with The Sierra Fund who is responsible for conducting the marketing campaign necessary to secure 7,500 prepaid applications. Following the collection of the first application, the SNC has one year to submit the 7,500 applications.

At the March 2008 Board meeting, the Board was presented with a copy of a marketing plan prepared by Velocity 7 under the direction of The Sierra Fund and SNC staff. The Board also approved the final plate design at that time.

At the June 2008 Board meeting, Boardmembers indicated the need for the fundraising efforts to be initiated and offered assistance in the process. At this point, a number of Boardmembers have been contacted for support of the fundraising efforts.

Current Status

A number of critical steps have been taken by The Sierra Fund, in consultation with the SNC, necessary to implement the marketing plan: a number of key potential donors have been identified and contacted to support this effort; a license plate Web site has been established; and the DMV has approved the official application brochure. Initial fundraising efforts will allow for the marketing effort to begin and the necessary organization to be put in place. Upon raising \$150,000, the formal campaign can begin. At this time \$5,000 has been raised, however as mentioned above a number of key solicitations are outstanding.

Next Steps

As described at the October meeting, fundraising for the license plate effort has been particularly difficult. In addition, competition from other state entities has likewise complicated the effort. Staff will continue to coordinate efforts with The Sierra Fund in regards to raising needed funds and keep the Board informed as to the progress. Boardmembers wishing to become actively involved with the effort should inform SNC staff or The Sierra Fund (Izzy Martin).

Recommendation

No action is needed by the Board at this time. Staff will continue to work with the Sierra Fund in fundraising efforts for the marketing campaign. The Board should consider next steps, based on progress to date, at the March Board meeting.